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One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Foreign Affairs
2170 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
www.foreignaffairs.house.gov

November 16, 2017

The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We are deeply concerned by the exodus of more than 100 senior Foreign Service Officers from the State Department since January. The number of minister counselors in the State Department has decreased by 15 percent, career ministers by 42 percent, and career ambassadors by an astounding 60 percent. The amount of talent leaving the State Department endangers the institution and undermines American leadership, security and interests around the world.

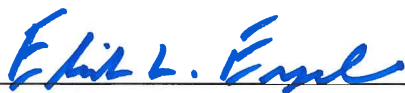
While we understand that attrition of senior officials will ebb and flow in any administration, the departures at the senior levels should sound the alarm bells for you as Secretary of State and the Administration. Those alarm bells are already ringing for us, the Committee with responsibility for oversight of the State Department, as we imagine they would for any board-of-directors overseeing a private company.

Even more troubling, the Department is reportedly planning to offer buyouts to reduce State's numbers even further, seemingly for no other goal than to decrease the size of the Department's personnel. With the range of crises, war, and humanitarian disaster around the world, slashing our diplomatic corps is downright dangerous.

Congress has already rejected the Administration's draconian proposed cuts to the international-affairs budget. But we remain profoundly concerned over what appears to be the intentional hollowing-out of our senior diplomatic ranks and the entire State Department with no clear goal. We therefore, urgently request a briefing to explain how these cuts serve United States national security interests and make the State Department more effective.

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Sincerely,



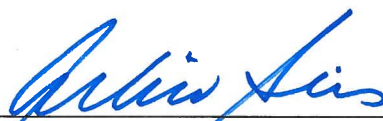
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The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson

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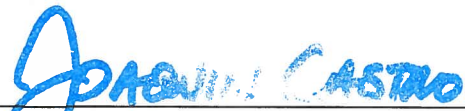
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Member of Congress



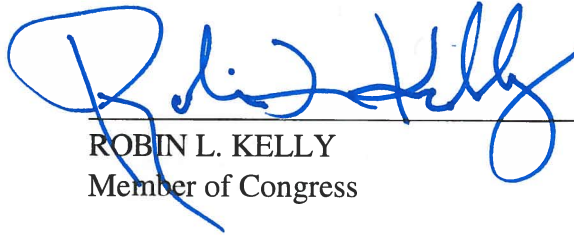
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